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E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/30/2017
TAGS: PGOV PHUM PREL XB JA
SUBJECT: JAPAN OFFERS SUGGESTIONS FOR ASIAN DEMOCRACY
PARTNERSHIP

REF: A. STATE 56424

¶B. TOKYO 2076
¶C. STATE 23810

Classified By: Ambassador J. Thomas Schieffer for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶11. (SBU) This message contains an action request. Please see para 5.

¶12. (SBU) Japan supports expanding regional cooperation to promote democracy, Asian Regional Policy Division Principal Deputy Director Yasuhiro Kobe told Embassy Tokyo Political Officer during a May 29 discussion about the U.S. proposal for an Asian Democracy Partnership (ADP). The Japanese government is still studying the proposal, stated Kobe, noting that the new initiative could be a practical way to implement the principles Foreign Minister Aso espoused in his November 2006 "Arc of Freedom and Prosperity" speech.

¶13. (C) Kobe said that the Japanese government would need more time to give a final answer, but offered the following comments:

-- Focus on programs, not politics: Kobe worried that some countries of the region would "react very badly" to the announced partnership, and suggested that great care be taken in packaging the announcement to avoid "aggravating these political sensitivities."

-- Broaden the mandate: Japan wants the mission of the ADP to include working to eliminate corruption and promoting transparency in both public administration and the judicial process.

-- Acknowledge the diversity of Core Group countries: In addition to the fact that every country has a unique development assistance policy, Kobe emphasized the difference between the Core Group's mature democracies and countries that were still working to develop high-functioning democracy. The Core Group should not be officially divided into these two groups, stated Kobe, but the "1st Group" of mature democracies would need to focus some part of their efforts on information sharing to assist the "2nd Group" developing democracies within the Core Group.

-- No joint projects: Coordination of efforts should involve a clear demarcation of the role played by each participant country's project, added Kobe, dismissing joint projects as "very difficult."

-- Prioritize working-level contact: Kobe requested that plans for an "ADP Leaders Conference" be postponed until working-level contact was firmly established.

-- Determine public/private partnerships on a case-by-case

basis: ADP countries must be careful not to agitate countries that are averse to NGO involvement, finished Kobe.

¶14. (SBU) Kobe asked for clarification about the mechanism for coordinating existing programs mentioned in ref A non-paper. He also mentioned that Japan is unclear about the difference between the Asian Democracy Partnership and the Partnership for Democratic Governance (PDG, ref C). Noting the global composition of the PDG and its location in the OECD, he asked for additional information about how the two organizations would interface and how their mechanisms for cooperation compare.

¶15. (SBU) ACTION REQUEST: Post requests that the Department provide clarification about the mechanism for cooperation and coordination intended by ADP planners. Post also requests that the Department provide guidance on the differences and comparative benefits of the ADP and the PDG.

SCHIEFFER